

**LIFE SCIENCES CORRIDOR
MEETING MINUTES
August 16, 2011, 2:00 PM
Conference Call**

ATTENDANCE:

Sherry Ambrose, Ivan Baines, Heather Belmont, Randy Berridge, Juan Carlos Del Valle, Jaap Donath, Divina Grossman, Gary Hines, Jonathan (“Jack”) Lord, Casey Lunceford, Harry Orf, Gary Margules, Erin McColsky (recording for Denis Gallon), Gisela Mohring, Ramaswamy Narayanan, Marcelo Radice, Thomas Roberts, Mark Rosenberg, Shawn Rowan (BDBPB), Stephen Sauls, Mary Jane Saunders, Ed Schons.

ABSENT:

Ivette L. Arango, David Armstrong, Isabel Cosio Carballo, Rudy Fernandez, Ray Ferrero, Dennis Gallon, George L. Hanbury II, John C. Hitt, Ken Jessell, Ed Massey, Rolando Montoya, Frank Nero, Larry Pelton, Donna Shalala, Kelly Smallridge, Robert Swindell, Ronald Toll.

Meeting commenced at 2:02 p.m. on August 16, 2011.

I. Welcome and Roll Call

Vice President Grossman called the roll. President Rosenberg welcomed everyone and asked new members Dr. Ivan Baines (Max Planck Florida Institute), Dr. Jonathan “Jack” Lord (University of Miami) and Dr. Harry Orf (Scripps Florida) to introduce themselves. President Rosenberg reported that Drs. Baines, Lord and Orf had all agreed to serve on the Executive Committee. He stated that the intention of the Life Sciences Corridor Initiative was to gradually pull together the diverse assets in South Florida, have a common understanding of our respective missions and generate opportunities for our community. He thanked President Saunders for her help in bringing Dr. Baines and Dr. Orf on board. He then received the meeting agenda and it was accepted.

II. Review of Meeting Minutes (7-15-11)

President Rosenberg inquired whether there were any comments or improvements for the July 15, 2011 meeting minutes. He stated that the goal for future meetings was to have at least two substantive items on the agenda for each meeting so as to make effective progress. There were no proposed revisions and the minutes were accepted.

III. Executive Committee Composition

Dr. Grossman directed everyone’s attention to the list of Executive Committee members and asked for the approval of the list with the additions of Dr. Baines, Dr. Lord and Dr. Orf. Dean Lunceford motioned for approval and President Saunders seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Dr. Grossman announced that the next meeting would be for the Executive Committee only and would be held at FIU on Friday, September 23, 2011.

IV. Life Sciences and IT Asset Map

Dr. Grossman reported that Jaap Donath and Gisela Mohring of the Beacon Council had to leave early so she directed everyone to agenda item 4E and the Life Sciences database reports, after which the updates on the rest of the Asset Map would be delivered.

E. Life Sciences Companies

1. Hoover Life Science Database - F. Nero (J. Donath)

Dr. Donath explained that the database included all the life sciences companies that were here and while it could be cleaned up a bit, it was comprehensive. Dr. Grossman stated that there had been prior discussion and it had been decided to remove the service provider companies. She asked if the group members had reviewed the web links sent and if anyone had any recommendations. She suggested that we cross-reference the Hoover list with the Sid-Martin Florida BioDatabase list and determine which ones should be included from the remaining companies. Dr. Donath commented that he felt the list should be inclusive, not limiting. President Rosenberg reported that there had already been several requests for the database and we needed to make some decisions and move forward with the chosen list.

2. Florida BioDatabase – M. Radice & D. Grossman

Mr. Radice reported that Sid-Martin used the biomedical/biotech definition provided by Ernst and Young, an industry reporting company. He said that Ernst and Young search extensively by looking at publications, surveying companies and other means, and that they do their due diligence to ensure that the companies are legitimate and active. He said he was comfortable with their methods of research and the companies that they included. He said that although the focus of their list of bioscience companies was narrow, he recommended that we adopt their list and contemplate expanding it later. Dr. Grossman pointed out the Ernst and Young definitions – for the database and for the individual industry sectors; Ms. Mohring stated that she felt there were more companies out there that fell under these definitions. Suggestions ranged from adapting the narrowly-focused Florida BioDatabase to cleaning up the extensive Hoover database by removing the service providers and extraneous companies like the dental labs and manufacturing companies. Some felt the Florida BioDatabase was too narrow, while others thought the Hoover database was too broad. It was agreed that the Hoover list would be cleaned up and then circulated to the group for review.

A. Educational Programs and Numbers of Graduates

Dr. Grossman reported that the data on the educational programs and the numbers of graduates had been updated to include the 2010-1011 data for all but four of the institutions, some of which had not yet completed their cycle of reporting and would be added later.

B. Research Capabilities

Dr. Grossman advised everyone that the Research Capabilities by institution had been updated with some additional information provided by FIU.

C. Research Parks

Dr. Grossman directed everyone to the descriptions of the two research parks, which had been added to the Asset Map.

D. Venture Capital Companies

Dr. Grossman reported that the list had been revised and edited. Mr. Margules raised an issue with one of the companies. Dr. Grossman responded that the list was currently being reviewed

by a contact of hers, who was an attorney with many years working with venture capital companies. He had agreed to look over the list and make recommendations.

Dr. Grossman summed up the reports on the Asset Map updates and informed the group that conversations had begun on how to disseminate the information. She proposed that it be uploaded on to everyone's website; FIU would create a new logo and distribute it to all of the Work Group institutions for their use when posting the materials.

V. Life Sciences Initiative - Branding Update

Mr. Berridge directed everyone to the report submitted by Roger Pynn and summarized the work done to date to help the group decide on the brand. He reviewed the various regional economic development areas around the country and the advice of Mr. Pynn that we avoid focusing on I.T. as it is an enabling technology. He stated that Mr. Pynn's recommendation was "Life Tech Florida". President Rosenberg asked for comments on the name and the response was overwhelmingly positive. Dr. Grossman stated that we would move forward with the name "Life Tech Florida" and will distribute the logos with all of the materials for posting on the websites.

VI. Industry Report – Max Planck Florida Institute

Dr. Baines reported Max Planck is a basic research company, covering all of the sciences, and one of the first in Germany. It had adopted the U.S. model of technology transfer early on and had a number of success stories including Pseudamed, a new protein blockbuster, and flash technology for MRIs. The Florida Institute is focused on neuroscience, specifically neuro-circuits or how the brain is wired and state-of-the-art imaging technology. Their research has had a significant effect on a broad range of imaging technologies. One example is the use of viruses, such as rabies, as viral "tools" to trace how neurons are connected. They can use a combination of imaging and viruses to map the brain, creating a sort of "Google Brain," or a digital, anatomical map of the brain, which is very useful in many aspects including research on diseases such as Alzheimer's that involve multiple parts of the brain. Currently, Max Planck Florida Institute has 58 people, with six active research groups, and one Nobel Laureate, Dr. Bert Sakmann. Dr. David Fitzpatrick is the CEO and Scientific Director.

Dr. Baines stated that Florida has research strength in neuroscience. FAU has a strong neuro/neuro biology department and is working with complex systems in brain sciences. The University of Miami has the Miami Project, and a focus on paralysis and injuries to the central nervous system. Scripps Florida has a neuroscience department headed up by Dr. Ron Davis, and a number of other institutes including the Berman Institute and the Torrey Pines Institute all have research activities in that area, spanning all the way from basic to applied and translational, with other universities having related work as well. There is a real opportunity to leverage the Life Tech corridor branding or identity in terms of neuroscience being a strength in Florida.

With regard to the discussions on the database, Dr. Baines reported that he had struggled with the Ernst and Young definitions and a number of efforts to establish clusters for bioscience companies. He concluded that it is useful to think of the intended purpose when trying to decide what definitions to use. There are two uses: one is promotion and marketing and a narrower definition focus is better for this because it projects a higher level of credibility, while the other use is as a source for information, and for that, a broader focus is better. As long as the database is well categorized and allocated, and the data is clearly labeled and easy to navigate, the broader focus is better.

President Rosenberg thanked Dr. Baines for his presentation and asked him if there were currently any vehicles in South Florida for conversations like this, where interested stakeholders could learn, and possibly react to, or identify opportunities. Dr. Baines replied that there were a number of different forums for networking; BioFlorida and Enterprise Development Corporation of South Florida are two. There are meetings and forums that happen once a month in different areas; there are quite a lot of initiatives that work well and have been fruitful. President Rosenberg stated that FIU is going to be hiring a lot of good faculty over the next eight years and it would be good - if there were needs that our partners had - to understand what they were, proactively and strategically, rather than reactively and apologetically. He stated that FIU was going to benefit by having a broader conversation that can, at the very minimum strike at the heart of how our resources are allocated for our scientific assets.

Dr. Baines recommended that in an upcoming face-to-face meeting, we identify a 10-bullet point priority list, based on our existing strengths, of what we consider to be the key strategic goals or milestones that we can achieve over the next period. He added that this was exactly for the purposes suggested, so that each of us individually knows, if faced with some choices on which direction to go, where we would get better traction. It is a healthy exercise to ask the question: what are our strengths, and what unique competitive advantages or opportunities do they provide. He proposed that FIU or another university could take the lead on hosting a meeting of the stakeholders but cautioned that we must have a defined product, perhaps 5-10 bullet points of the priority goals, so it is not just a networking meeting. President Rosenberg agreed that was certainly one of the by-product goals that we could expect to measure ourselves by over time, and said we will definitively start that conversation at the next Executive Committee Meeting.

VII. Economic Development Administration (E.D.A.) Grant

Dr. Grossman reported that she and others from FIU had recently met with Dr. Barrett Haga of the EDA, a senior legislative analyst in Washington, DC. She stated that Dr. Haga was excited to hear about the Life Sciences Corridor, saying it was consistent with what the federal government and the administration desired to catalyze innovation to get us out of this economic recession. He provided information on EDA grants awarded in the past and the criteria for successful grants. From the description of the Life Sciences Corridor Initiative, he thought we meet virtually all of the EDA criteria: national and strategic priority; underserved communities; return on investment; collaborative regional innovation, which involves collaboration among multi-jurisdictional leaderships; linking and leveraging regional assets; and public-private partnerships. He thought because we have both public and private universities, colleges, economic development councils, and the research parks and research institutes, we are well positioned. Given what Dr. Baines described in his report, it seems there are a number of ideas we could assemble in a grant proposal. Dr. Grossman solicited thoughts on what elements could be included if we were interested in submitting a grant proposal for this region.

Mr. Berridge reported that Dr. Rod Casto at USF (813-974-1082) received a \$2 million EDA grant to set up an incubator in Sarasota County associated with the Mote Marine Laboratory designed to create companies that would work on ways to increase and improve the production of food. He suggested that we contact Dr. Casto for details on his successful grant.

Dr. Grossman thought that one possible strategic focus on the grant was neuroscience, as suggested by Dr. Baines, and inquired about the idea of that or another specific thematic focus. She suggested the possibility of something related to strengthening tech transfer in universities, questioning whether there could be a shared tech transfer mechanism. She solicited other ideas that could work.

Dr. Grossman stated that Dr. Haga had sent some examples of proposals that had been funded in previous years. Examples included an innovation infrastructure in Oregon to address gaps in commercialization for three technology and industry clusters; research incubators; strategic planning grants; cluster analyses; and building research parks, which require matching funds, as do any bricks and mortar ideas. She proposed that everyone email their ideas to her as it was our intent to engage with Phil Trader, the regional EDA representative, to discuss possibilities.

Mr. Berridge volunteered that he had heard a SIF Initiative (Social Innovation Fund) mentioned at the Regional Planning Council in Atlanta, which provided the means to have your proposal vetted by a large audience. He suggested that we check with Phil Trader on whether that was an option for us. Mr. Berridge also reported that to date, the Florida High Tech Corridor had received \$5 million in matching funds, but he did not know if that was an option that might return in the future.

President Saunders agreed that matching funds is a great path to pursue; a public-private partnership is an easy sell. Dr. Baines agreed that it was an added asset, providing double the benefit. Dr. Grossman informed everyone that she had been informed that if we made an EDA application it would be through the South Florida Regional Planning Council. She added that we had a connection already because a number of those on this current conference call were on the Sustainable Communities' research grant application with SFRPC that was funded for \$4.25 million recently.

VIII. Questions/ Future Directions

Dr. Grossman again requested that everyone send her their ideas, including those discussed on this call, which could be discussed at the September 23 meeting of the Executive Committee.

President Rosenberg thanked everyone for coming and summarized the progress of the call saying that we had made the decision on what to call ourselves, on refining the asset map, on the composition of the Executive Committee, and had our first substantive discussion, thanks to Max Planck. We are now where we said we wanted to be. The next meeting is at FIU with the Executive Committee but it is an open meeting if anyone else wishes to attend. We will have a substantive discussion about the annual work plan, the deliverables, and how we are going to measure any success, and we will have a design or two on the brand so we can see what works for us.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m. on August 16, 2011.

Action Items

1. Dr. Grossman will:
 - a. clean up the Hoover database and circulate it to the group for review
 - b. follow up with Eric Joh regarding the venture capital company list
 - c. work with External Relations on possible designs for the brand logo that can be distributed for use with the posting of the Asset Map material.
2. Everyone is to email Dr. Grossman with key strategic goals to be discussed at the September 23 meeting.